



# THE KHYBER;

A SKETCH OF THE PASS, ITS ESTABLISHMENT, PHYSICAL  
FEATURES AND RECENT HISTORY, WITH AN  
OUT-LINE MAP, AND SOME HINTS



EDWARD A. MORPHY.

THACKER, SPINK & Co., Calcutta and Simla.

THACKER & Co., Ltd., Bombay, 1899.



## PREFACE.

collated; and, so far as figures, distances, etc., are concerned, their accuracy may be relied upon. The brochure aspires to be no more than it is—a hand-book, not a history—and, though it carries no embellishments in the shape of warlike tales, it is hoped that it may prove useful to some whose duties or curiosity may lead them north-west of Peshawar, and that it may be of interest to some others whose happier interests in life will never carry them across the rugged frontiers of our Eastern Empire.

E. A. M.

SIMLA, *October 1899.*

# CONTENTS.



## CHAPTER.

- I.**—The Khyber Pass—The ~~Indo-Afghan~~ <sup>Kabul</sup> highway—Length and physical features—The rival highway—Buddhist remains—Warlike history—British forts in the Pass—The evacuation of 1897 . . . . .
- II.**—The Pass by marches—Jamrud—Ali Musjid—Its fortifications—Caves and *sangars* by the roadside—Lundi Kotal—Destruction of the Afridi strongholds—Description of their villages—Defences of Lundi Kotal—The Shinwaris—Lundi Khana—The Afghan Frontier—Tributary Passes . . . . .
- III.**—How to reach the Khyber—Abandonment of the Khyber Railway Scheme—Probable extension of the existing railway to Jamrud—Lord Curzon's Frontier Policy—Accommodation at Peshawar—Transport thence to Lundi Kotal—Permission required from the Political Officer—Choice and cost of a vehicle—Time occupied in making the trip—Its dangers during the hot weather—The Upper Khyber—The route by marches to Kabul—Necessary outfit for the journey—The escort provided to travellers by the Amir—General remarks—Physical and general features of the Pass . . . . . 22
- IV.**—Some points of interest about Lundi Kotal—Tor Sappar, Suffolk Hill and Pisgah—Shinwari villages—Buddhist remains—Arrival of a *Khafila*—An interesting spectacle. . . . . 39

## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
<b>V.</b> —The tribes of the Khyber—Good behaviour of the Shinwaris—Lawless habits of the Zakka Khels—Some incidents of their history—The Malikdins—Their byegone greatness,—The Kukkis, Kamrais, Kambars and Sipahs . . . . .	44
<b>VI.</b> —Subsidies paid to the tribes—Zones of the Pass for which the various Khels are responsible—History repeating itself . . . . .	58
<b>VII.</b> —The Khyber Rifles, their establishment and personnel—History of their organisation—Their services in the Black Mountain Expedition—Cost of their maintenance—Cost of the total up-keep of the Khyber. . .	68
<b>VIII.</b> —The trade of the Khyber—Its history—The old Tartara route—Its decline and consequent ruin of the Mullagoris—Days on which the Pass is open—Income of the Pass from taxes—The Amir's trade monopolies . . . . .	75
Outline Map of the Khyber Pass	<i>Frontispiece.</i>

# THE KHYBER PASS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

The Khyber Pass—The Indo-Afghan highway—Length and physical features—The rival highway—Buddhist remains—Warlike history—British forts in the Pass—The evacuation of 1897.

---

A graveyard  
for British sol-  
diers.

Considering the strategic importance of the Khyber Pass, and the part it has played in the frontier history of India, comparatively few particulars concerning even its physical features—much less the details of its administration, etc.—are understood either by the people of India, whereof it is the North-Western Gate, or the general British public which has long regarded it as a graveyard for its soldiers. The recently sanctioned reorganisation of the Khyber Rifles, \* however, has awakened some interest in the Pass; but the subject is one of more than transient consequence, and therefore

---

\* The Khyber Rifles were reorganised in June 1899. For an account of this singular body of fighting men see Chapter V.

some facts and figures regarding its location and history, its social and physical features, may be found worth perusing.

To describe it briefly, the Khyber is a well graded highway leading from India to Afghanistan through the rugged hills that rise up between the British frontier, beyond the City of Peshawar in the Punjab, and the Afghan town of Dakka. The distance between these two points is approximately 44 miles; but the 11 miles from Peshawar to Jamrud Fort are through a level plain; and the Khyber proper—the Pass through the fastnesses of the Afridi and Shinwari countries—is only about 32 miles long. The trend of the Pass is in a north-westerly direction. It is wide enough to admit of cart traffic, and its highest point at Lundi Kotal (*ota* means the apex or saddle of a pass) is only 3,600 feet above the level of the sea. The Peshawar plain is about 1,200 feet above the sea level, so the rise from Jamrud to the Kotal is only about 2,400 feet. This, over a distance of 17 miles, gives a gradient of only about 141 feet in the mile. On the upper end of the Pass the descent is

Length of the  
Pass is 32 miles.

Its greatest  
elevation is 3,600  
feet.

The Afghan  
town of Dakka.

steeper. Dakka being about 1,300 feet above the sea level, the road must drop about 2,300 feet in a distance of 12 miles, which is equal to an average incline of about 192 feet per mile. These are not steep gradients.

Predatory instincts  
of the  
tribesmen.

The territory through which this road is constructed is almost entirely mountainous, not five miles of the route traversing levels that are broad enough to admit of any cultivation. The inhabitants of the adjacent hills are semi-savage tribes, of fickle and turbulent character. The land of their fathers being too poor to support them, they long ago adopted robbery as a means of subsistence, and the training of countless generations has so deeply imbued them with predatory instincts that they are almost incapable of reform. In the olden days they practically kept the Khyber closed to all traffic, their depravity being such that they could not refrain from looting even those caravans that had paid them toll for immunity if not protection. This circumstance compelled the Indo-Afghan traders to seek a safer route over the more difficult defiles of the Tartara Pass (see Map), which runs in a manner

The Tartara  
route.



parallel to the Khyber and north by east, and east of it. It was not until the close of the second Afghan war of 1878-79, when the Pass was placed under British control, that it was opened as a highway for the traffic between the domain of the Amir and our Indian Empire.

The opening  
of the Khyber.

Traders driven  
to use the Tar,  
tara Route.

Its history as a utilitarian factor in the commerce of nations, commences at that date. Prior thereto it had an internal history of its own—a history that teems with illimitable variety. Thousands of years ago, when Buddhism was young, the propagators of that sect bore down through its fastnesses and had battles there that were forgotten before the Christian era had begun. Buddhist remains of the most remote antiquity are plentiful in the vicinity of Lundi Kotal. A great stretch of massive wall—the vestige of some national boundary line, no doubt—crests a ridge near the water reservoirs of the Fort. Lower down the Pass, towards Ali Musjid, is a massive *tope*, or dome-shaped mass of masonry, on the apex of a ridge that juts out into a valley like a peninsula. Afghan and Indian have fought in

A varied his-  
tory.

Buddhist re-  
mains near the  
Kotal.



Triumphs of  
these uncon-  
querable mar-  
auders.

Repulse of  
Nadir Shah.

the grim defiles of the Pass; the Mahomedan conquerors swept it through. The hill tribes were always embroiled in internecine feuds of their own, as was natural among clans of robbers. Despite their own differences, however, they long resisted the power of the Moslem conquerors, and the Afridis were the last race in that section of Asia to abandon their idols and their fire worship for the Koran. They are now all Mahomedans. Alexander the Great left the tribesmen alone when he conquered India, and entered the plains wherein Peshawar now stands by a circuitous march to the east of the Pass. Nadir Shah was driven back from a point north-west of Lundi Kotal and was forced to find a way around by the Bazar Valley. The Sikh rulers of Peshawar in the early days of the century paid a blackmailed tribute to the Afridis to keep the road open, just as we do to this very day. The English fought and won the battle of Ali Musjid in the Khyber in 1878. They evacuated the Pass when the Afridis seized Lundi Kotal and Ali Musjid in August 1897, and re-entered it, unopposed, four months later. The massacre

The massacre  
of British troops  
in 1840.

of our troops during the first Afghan war did not occur in the Khyber, as some suppose ; but a hundred and thirty miles beyond it in the rugged defile known as the Lataband Pass between Barakhob and Samucha Mullah Mir, about thirty miles this side of Kabul.

When the Afghans held the Pass, their nearest stronghold to India was Fort Abdurrahman, about a couple of miles below Ali Musjid. Its dismantled ruins are still standing ; but we have never considered it necessary to establish a garrison there. In connection with our tenure of the road, our forts are :—

1. Fort Jamrud, in the Peshawar Plain, which commands the mouth of the Khyber and is the head-quarters of the Khyber Rifles, who garrison the Pass. At Jamrud also the *per capita* road tax is collected on all animals coming to or from India.

Fort Jamrud

2. Fort Maude, a much smaller fortress, about two miles and a half from Jamrud, within the entrance of the Pass.

3. Fort Ali Musjid, nine miles from Jamrud, which commands an opening in the Pass large enough to permit a caravan to halt and water

there. At either end of this open space the Pass narrows to a neck that is easily defensible.

Lundi Kotal.

4. Lundi Kotal, a fort on the Kotal or apex of the Pass, situate in a comparatively wide plain that is completely surrounded by mountains. The fort is 20 miles beyond Jamrud, and the *Khafilas*, or caravans, cover the distance between the two points in a day.

Lundi Kotal is our nearest stronghold to the Afghan Frontier, but the British section of the Pass stretches four miles north-west of it to Tor Kham. The remaining eight miles, to Dakka, run through Afghan territory.

Value of timber  
as loot.

In August 1897, when we evacuated the Pass, we abandoned Lundi Kotal and Ali Musjid to the Afridis for the time being. When we re-entered it four months later in December, we found both forts dismantled, and every bit of wood-work in them either burned or carried away. The scarcity of timber on the naked hills renders wood a most valuable species of loot in that section of the country, and hence the removal of every stick of timber from both forts.

## CHAPTER II.

The Pass by marches—Jamrud—Ali Musjid—Its fortifications—Caves and *sangars* by the roadside—Lundi Kotal—Destruction of the Afridi strongholds—Description of their villages—Defences of Lundi Kotal—The Shinwaris—Lundi Khana—The Afghan Frontier—Tributary Passes.

Before proceeding further with a description of places whose relative positions may not be easily understood, it would be well to call attention to the accompanying outline map of the Pass, and its environments which will convey a far better idea of the course and contour of the celebrated highway than any words could be expected to do.

From Peshawar, in the south-east corner of the plan, it will be seen that the Khyber road runs almost due west to and beyond Jamrud *viâ* Fort Hari Singh, which stands about midway between the Frontier City and Fort Jamrud. This road is through an open plain, and is a broad level thoroughfare—a *boulevard* in fact. Fort Jamrud, wherein are situate the barracks of the Khyber Rifles, is practically

Contour of the  
Pass.

The road from  
Peshawar to  
Jamrud.

A perfect bou-  
levard.

The Gate of  
the Pass,

the gate to the Pass, though the road for a couple of miles beyond it is still over the comparative level of the plain. It is not until within a rifle shot of Fort Maude, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles further west, that the real Khyber commences. Thence on to Ali Musjid is a continuous upward climb; the occasional dips all trending towards loftier elevations beyond. The roadway is good, and, considering the obstacles presented by the rough contour of the country, the grade is excellent. In some places the road-bed is built up like a viaduct against the precipitous cliff side, supported by ponderous piles of masonry; in others it is a mere chasm hewn through the rock by the sappers. Again, there are stretches where nature—helping the designs of man—has cleft a water-cut or wrenched the mountain masses aside in some mighty seismic convulsion. Through all these the Pass winds up gently on an easy incline over a road-bed as serviceable as that of any English country highway—better than many, indeed—for the entire distance from Jamrud to Lundi Kotal, and thence downhill to Tor Kham on the Afghan frontier.

Excellence of  
the grade and  
road-bed.

Beyond Tor Kham the road is in charge of the Afghans, and is in very poor condition. \*

The Afghan section is badly maintained.

Just below Ali Musjid the Pass, which has been crossing the comparatively open country

\* The following details regarding the physical features of the Khyber are condensed from General MacGregor's official account, by Dr. W. W. Hunter in his *Imperial Gazetteer*:---Immediately on leaving Jamrud, the defensible ground may be said to commence, as the spurs come almost up to that place in round bare knolls of low height, but very sufficient for the command of the road. Kadam, however, 3 miles from Jamrud, is generally considered to be the actual eastern entrance. At this point the hills begin to close in, and 1,000 yards further the width of the pass is 450 feet; the bed is easy, level, and covered with small shingle,—the hills on the left are very steep; 500 yards further on, this width gradually lessens to 370 feet, the hills on either side being sheer precipices. At 1,200 yards further the width is 190 feet, the hills being steep for 50 or 60 feet in height, then sloping back; 850 yards further the width is 210 feet, the hills on the right being precipitous, and on the left rounded and practicable; at 1050 yards further the width is 70 feet, the hills being very precipitous on both sides; 500 yards further the width is 230 feet, the hills on the left being precipitous, and on the right rounded and practicable; 2 miles further the width is 250 feet, the hills on the right being perpendicular, and on the left practicable; 1050 yards further the width is 65 feet, the hills on both sides being very steep, those on the left perpendicular; 1,050 yards further the width is 110 feet, the hills on both sides being comparatively easy and practicable; 880 yards further the width is 210 feet, the hills on the left being steep and on the right open and easy; 2 miles 220 yards further the width is 200 feet, the hills on the left being steepish, and on the right open and comparatively easy.



The Pass at Ali Musjid. along a river-bed, narrows to a mere neck. On the left the river—a stream in ordinary

At Ali Musjid, 1,300 yards further, the width is 40 feet, the hills being perpendicular and impracticable. Between Kadam and this point, Moorcroft says, the mountains on either hand are about 1,300 feet high, slaty and to all appearance inaccessible; 1,450 yards further the width is 270 feet; hills on the left precipitous, on the right comparatively easy; 1 mile 1,000 yards further the width is 390 feet, the hills being very steep;  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles beyond this lies the Lalabeg valley, which averages  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile broad; 880 yards further the width is 10 feet or less, the hills being quite perpendicular; in 1,600 yards further the road goes over the Landi Khana Pass the width being 140 feet, and the hills being very steep, especially on the left;  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles further the width is 300 feet, the hills being steep on the left, but not so precipitous on the right;  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles further, the width is 200 feet, the hills being very steep on both sides; 3 miles further is Dhaka, where the defile opens. The total length of the defile, therefore, from Jamrud to Dhaka is about 33 miles.

The elevation in feet of various points of the pass is—Jamrud 1670; Ali Musjid 2433; Landi Khana, 2488; Landi Kotal, 3373; Dhaka, 1404. If the elevation of Jamrud (2,433) given by Mr. Scott of the survey is right, all these figures would be increased by 763 feet. The ascent over the Landi Khana Pass is narrow, rugged, steep, and generally the most difficult part of the whole road. Guns could not be drawn here except by men, and then only after the improvement of the road; the descent is along a well-made road, and is not so difficult. Just beyond Ali Musjid the road passes over a bed of projecting and slippery rock, which makes this portion extremely difficult for laden animals. The Khaibar can be turned by the Tartara road, which enters the hills about 9 miles north of Jamrud (another branch entering  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles nearer) and either joins the Khaibar road at Ludgai or keeps the north of the range and goes to Dhaka.



seasons, but a torrent during the rains—ripples over its pebbly bed towards Jamrud. On its right bank the bare brown hills rise up like walls, impassable even to the wild goats. The cliff at Ali Musjid. On the right of the Pass stands an almost sheer precipice whence boulders might easily be shot down to crush an invading host. Beyond this neck the Pass widens out for about half a mile, when it again closes in until it resembles a veritable chasm, something like the Grand Canon of the Colorado. A veritable chasm. On either side the rocky walls rise up almost perpendicular. Below the river flips along merrily like a brown streak over a narrow margin of grey pebbles. The sun there never gleams on the roadway until it is in its zenith, and in the winter time, when the storms come from the north, the blasts hoot, and roar, and rumble through this narrow gap, like Brobdagian trumpets and thunder; and the howl of each blast can be heard up the Pass long before the blast itself reaches Ali Musjid. Home of the storm.

Commanding the open space above and below, the Afghans long ago built a great fort Fortification and sacred tomb at Ali Musjid. on the pinnacle of the loftiest peak on the

Ali Musjid.

ridge that rises beyond the river bank on the left side of the road. This was re-constructed by the British when they invested the place after the battle of Ali Musjid in 1878. They also constructed additional blockhouses on the adjacent hill tops overlooking the Pass, so as to command the country back of the Pass to westward. Other fortifications were made above the open space on the right of the road, as well as blockhouses commanding the narrow defile higher up. Commissariat godowns, etc., were erected in the low land, as well as a *serai*, or enclosure, for the caravans to rest in. Over and above these structures there was nothing in Ali Musjid save the tomb of the sainted Mahomedan who first ministered at the mosque of Ali, after which the place is named. The tomb is a simple affair under a dome-like canopy of sorts, but it is not worth while making a trip up the Khyber merely to visit it.

A desolate  
highway.

Beyond Ali Musjid the gradual upward incline continues through a wild narrow gorge in which there are no signs of human habitations or of anything calculated to support

human life—nothing but brown mountains and brown shadows, with odd bunches of scrub sprouting out here and there among the rocks. The river-bed is gradually lost, and there are no springs. Occasionally one may detect a cave or two wherein shepherds or marauders find shelter—more commonly the latter in olden days, but the bold forayer of the past has been badly crowded out of the Khyber proper of late years. These caves are small affairs scooped out of the decomposed rock, or yellow clay, of the mountain side. They are seldom more than twelve feet across inside, and about seven or eight feet in height. Their interiors are destitute of finish or furniture, and are begrimed with smoke. Little *sangars*, or low breastworks of loosely piled up stones, whence a rifleman can snipe at the unsuspecting enemy, are generally to be seen in the vicinity of these caves, as, indeed, they may be observed in all likely places commanding any strategically advantageous section of the Pass.

The caves of  
the shepherds  
and marauders.

Strategically  
placed *sangars*.

About seven miles above Ali Musjid the Pass opens out into an irregular series of

plains or valleys, completely hemmed in by the mountains, which also jut out into the levels like peninsulas. On the end of one of these ridges abutting on the road is built the Buddhist *tope* above referred to, and this *tope* is used as a picket station by troops when the Pass has to be picketed for the safe conduct of convoys. The plain is the abode of various *khels* or clans of the Afridi tribes, and crops grow up freely among the pebbly rocks with which its fields are covered. A number of quadrangular mud-walled villages—each with a look-out tower of the type made familiar in the illustrations of the Tirah campaign—bespeckle the plains at close intervals. At least they used to do so, and probably will cluster there again at some future date, though they were practically all razed to the earth by General Hammond's brigade when he invested Lundi Kotal during the winter of 1897-98. Where three score towers once stood sentinel over as many Afridi villages, however, there are now only two or three. These belong to certain faithful soldiers of the Khyber Rifles who did not desert, as so many of their com-

Razed Afridi  
villages near  
Lundi Kotal.

Fidelity re-  
warded

rades did, to join their revolting kinsmen when the general rising occurred in August 1897. All the other villages were destroyed utterly ; and save where the spring crops grow, seemingly unguarded and unwatched by the roadside, the place is now a desolate wilderness.

The country continues open at intervals most of the rest of the way up to Lundi Kotal, where there is quite a spacious plain, known as the Loargi Plain, in the centre of which stands the Lundi Kotal Fort.

The Loargi Plain.

This structure is not a fortress in the general sense of the term, and could be wiped out of existence in an hour by the lightest artillery. It is a quadrangular enclosure with small bastions at each corner whence the walls can be enfiladed. It affords the necessary protection from rifle fire or from risk of being taken by assault, its loop-holed walls being from 12 to 14 feet in height on the average and in places more. No permanent artillery is kept there, and, indeed, such would be unnecessary on account of the impossibility of defending the situation from attack by artil-

Description of Lundi Kotal.

Not really a defensible fort.

Environments  
of Lundi Kotal.

lery. The fort is surrounded by hills from which it could be swept by rifle fire were those hills left unpicketed, and it is only styled a fort by courtesy.

The friendly  
Shinwaris.

Behind it stretch acres and acres of well tilled fields, amid which rise numerous villages belonging to the friendly Shinwari tribes who helped us to picket the enviroing heights during the later months of the Tirah campaign. In front is the parade ground and beyond it the cemeteries—native and European—where many hundred soldiers lie buried. Near these latter are the water tanks that gather the water in the rainy season, and, near these, is the *Serai*, or walled enclosure, wherein the *Khafilas* are safely guarded at night pending their journeys to or from India. Overlooking this latter, on a low hill, is a circular block-house where the guardian picket is stationed to protect the convoy from the approach of robbers or *badmashes*. Inside the four walls are houses and sheds and open spaces for tents; also a small water tank; but the main water-supply of Lundi Kotal is obtained from a point nearly two miles beyond—on the down grade

Protection  
from *Budma-*  
*shas*.

Main water  
supply of the  
Fort.



towards Afghanistan—where a good spring, from which the water is carried in pipes, supplies three reservoirs that nestle in a gorge-like valley. On the other side of the block-house hill is a small race course.

Material improvements may be expected in the water-supply of the fortified *Serai*, or fort itself, almost as soon as this account is published. Within the walls there is an excellent well which has been unused since August 1897, when the rebel Afridis polluted it by throwing into it the bodies of the servants of Captain Barton, the Commandant of the Khyber Rifles. This well has since been submitted to a continued process of deodorisation and disinfection; and as soon as the Government Laboratory Authorities report that its water is fit to drink, there will be a supply within the fortifications to supply the actual drinking and cooking requirements of the entire garrison. This is a matter of vital consequence. At Ali Musjid water has to be carried from the river and up the face of an immense precipice by *bhistis*; and therefore the higher forts are practically untenable in a contest against any superior force that

A polluted well.

A Matter of vital importance.



Improving the  
defences.

could spare time sufficient to compel the defenders to succumb to the pangs of thirst. In addition to the strategically important water supply, the military defences of Lundi Kotal will shortly be so far improved as to render the fort itself a stronghold of no mean defensive power. On the hill overlooking the *Serai* to the north and north-east, serviceable block-houses—impregnable to the attacks of any light-armed force, and provisioned with all the requirements of a beleaguered guard during a couple of months siege—have been or are in course of being erected. The *Serai* itself has also been materially strengthened on the sides exposed to attack; the height of the walls has been so increased as to minimise the risk from “sniping,” and the efficiency of the defences has been improved in every way. Nevertheless, as stated above, the fort would be untenable against modern artillery.

Lundi Khana  
and Tor Kham.

The next point of consequence along the road is Lundi Khana, just below the Tanks, and then—four miles beyond the *Kotal*—is Tor Kham, on the Afghan frontier, where the British interests in the Khyber end, and

where the Khyber Rifles take over the *Khafilas* from the *Khassudars*, or tribal levies of the Amir. We have no control over the last eight miles of the Pass from Tor Kham to Dakka.

This is the route of the Khyber. Four minor passes connect it with the Bazar Valley. Two of these—the Chura and Alachi—enter the road a little below Ali Musjid. The other two—the Bazar and Bori—come out near Lundi Kotal. These are practically little better than “trails,” and are not available for wheeled traffic.

Tributary Passes

Beyond Tor Kham, where the British control of the Pass ceases, the road begins to deteriorate; but carts can be taken beyond that point as far as Nimla, twenty miles beyond Jalalabad, which latter town is just 50 miles beyond the Kotal.

End of the  
British Khyber.

In exceptional cases wheeled vehicles have been taken all the way from Peshawar to Kabul—Kabul being 150 miles beyond Lundi Kotal. The Amir's state carriages were so brought up on bullock carts in 1896; but the heavy guns presented to him a few years earlier, after the Durand Mission, had to be sent

The Upper  
Khyber.

Impassable to  
wheeled traffic.

up *viâ* Quetta, Kandahar and Ghazni (this last is pronounced *Hgrhuzni* in Afghanistan), being drawn by traction engines all the way. It would have been impossible to drag such heavy weights through and across such riverbeds as intersect the road between Nimla and Kabul. The *Khud* (or Little) Khyber between Dakka and Jalalabad is comparatively easy; but the Lataband Pass, beyond Gandamak on the Kabul road, where the Treaty of 1840 was signed and the British force annihilated, is at present impassable to such traffic. General Roberts made a road practicable for artillery all the way; but the snows and rains have wiped it out in all those places where the existence of a road is most necessary. The elephants that frequently carry from Jalalabad to Kabul goods that have been carted through the Khyber to the former town, cannot climb up the Lataband, and have to make a detour of some eight miles *viâ* the old British road, over which we used to send our guns when we had cantonments at Kabul. This eight-mile section of road is the only stretch between Tor Kham and Kabul that is conscientiously kept in repair.

The Lataband  
Pass.

The old British  
Road to Kabul.

## CHAPTER III.

How to reach the Khyber—Abandonment of the Khyber Railway Scheme—Probable extension of the existing railway to Jamrud—Lord Curzon's Frontier Policy—Accommodation at Peshawar—Transport thence to Lundi Kotal—Permission required from the Political Officer—Choice and cost of a vehicle—Time occupied in making the trip—Its dangers during the hot weather—The Upper Khyber—The route by marches to Kabul—Necessary outfit for the journey—The escort provided to travellers by the Amir—General remarks—Physical and general features of the Pass.

During the closing months of the Tirah campaign a scheme was mooted to carry a railway right up the Khyber to Lundi Kotal, in which event the adventurous tourist in Bombay or Calcutta, or any other European centre of India, could have booked himself at a moment's notice clear through by rail to the Afghan frontier. This project, however, was negatived in the Frontier Policy of Lord Curzon, as sanctioned by the Secretary of State in August 1899, wherein it was set forth that, were it desirable to connect an Indian Frontier Base with Afghanistan by a railway, a route

The Khyber  
Railway Scheme

Negatived by  
Lord Curzon.

other than that *via* the Khyber would more probably be followed. At the same time it was stated in the text of the Policy, as published, that the North-Western Railway system would probably be extended to Jamrud at an early date. In regard to this, it may be as well to reproduce the text of that part of Lord Curzon's Policy concerning the Khyber as it appeared in the *Pioneer*, Aug. 7th, 1899:—

Lord Curzon's  
Khyber Policy.

“The policy adopted in the Khyber involve, a similar abandonment of the schemes for new and costly fortifications and entails the substitution of a reorganised corps of Khyber Rifles for the regular garrison, one-half of which has already been withdrawn from Lundi Kotal, while it is expected that the remainder will follow as soon as the new arrangements are in working order. These consist of the extension and improved fortification of the existing fortified *serai* at Lundi Kotal and of the other smaller posts in the Pass, all of which will in future be held by the Khyber Rifles. The latter force has been raised to a strength of 1,200 men divided into two battalions, with six British officers ; and it will enjoy a revised scale of pay

and good-conduct allowances. It is understood that the Government of India are not inclined at present to proceed any further with the scheme for a Khyber Pass railway, since it is thought that, if the rail-road into Afghanistan from this quarter is required in the future, it is more likely to follow another route. But it is not improbable that the standard gauge will be continued at an early date from Peshawar to Jamrud. A movable column will be maintained at Peshawar to support the militia in the Khyber."

Projecte rail-  
way extension  
to Jamrud.

From this it may be seen that one can at present proceed by rail upon the route no further than Peshawar; and for the benefit of strangers in India, it is as well to explain that the latter city is 1,583 miles by rail from Bombay, the journey occupying 72 hours *viâ* the standard gauge or Great India Peninsula Railway route, and a few hours more *viâ* the narrow gauge, or Bombay, Baroda and Central India system. The fare from Bombay is Rs. 100, first class; and, as on all Indian railways, the second class fare is half that of first, and the third half that of second. Europeans do

The trip to  
Peshawar.



A paradox in  
railway fares,

not travel third class in India, but one's native servant does, and therefore the information is furnished here. From Calcutta the distance is 1,452 miles, and the time occupied in making the journey by the mail train *via* the East India Railway is less than 60 hours, the fare however, and singularly enough, is higher than that from Bombay, being Rs. 130, first class.

The Hotel and  
Dâk Bungalow.

Tickets should be taken to Peshawar Cantonments as distinguished from Peshawar City, for there is no accommodation for Europeans in the City itself. In the Cantonments, however, one can make oneself as comfortable as at any other Indian station. There is the regular Dâk Bungalow where one can find the customary accommodations of such rest-houses,—dismal rooms, a limited bill of fare, indifferently cooked food, and—in the case of the Peshawar establishment—millions of wasps on the verandah. It is, however, far superior to many Dâk Bungalows in larger stations, and until recently was the only place at which “the stranger within the gates” could find food and shelter. Shortly after the Tirah campaign, however, an hotel was

An experience  
of Bonifacio.



opened in an excellent location on the Mall by Mr. De Rozario, and the average traveller will find more comfort there than at the Dâk Bungalow. It is well managed, clean, and sets a good table, at the reasonable inclusive rate of Rs. 5 or 6 per day. The proprietor was himself up the Khyber with the Peshawar Column in 1897-98, and understands the country and its people. Accordingly, he makes arrangements for tongas, tum-tums, or other conveyances to carry one up to Lund Kotal, much better than the transient visitor and be expected to arrange for himself.

Here it should be again explained that the Khyber is only open for *Khafila* or other traffic on two days of the week—Tuesday and Friday—in the cold weather, and one day a week during the hot weather. Even on those days it may not be entered without a permit, which can be obtained upon application to the Political Officer of the Khyber at Peshawar. This permission is a very necessary formality, and, though the task of procuring it will entail but small delay at Peshawar, it would save inconvenience to make

Permission to  
visit the Pass.

A necessary  
formality.



A tonga accommodates four persons, including the driver; that is to say, three passengers.

A tum-tum accommodates the same number less comfortably, and is not to be recommended to so large a party, though for a single passenger, who may care to do some of the driving himself, a tum-tum is a pleasant vehicle to travel in, the Peshawar hack tum-tum being particularly good, the horses too being hard, swift and surefooted. In making the trip of the Pass, however, they are prone to meet with accidents: and, though they are preferable to tongas for a spin out along the level to Jamrud and back, the more cumbrous conveyance is to be recommended for the trip to Ali Musjid or Lundi Kotal.

Tum-tums and  
their hire.

The fare by tum-tum to Lundi Kotal is an indeterminate quantity and has to be bargained about before starting. In view of the fact that the Peshawar tum-tum wallah is one of the most irresponsibly unscrupulous ruffians unhung, it is well for the stranger to allow the hotel manager or the Dâk Bungalow baboo to make the necessary financial arrangements. At any rate, the proper fare is from Rs. 15 to

Financial pre-  
cautions to be  
taken.

Rs. 20 for the round trip; though a native can get it done for less.

### **CORRECTION.**

Since these pages were set up in type it seems that the Dâk Bungalow at Lundi Kotal has been closed. On November 17th an official notification was issued in connection with the management of the Khyber, wherein it was set forth that :—

Persons wishing to visit the Khyber Pass must first obtain written passes from the Political Officer in the Khyber, or, in his absence, from the Commissioner or the Officer Commanding the Khyber Force at Lundi Kotal, or the Officer Commanding the Khyber Rifles at Jamrud. Visitors are able to proceed as far as Lundi Kotal and return the same day by tonga with three hours stay allowed at Lundi Kotal, but no accommodation is available there.

*To face of page 29.*

from Peshawar, he can easily ascertain exactly what he will require for the excursion on whatever day he makes it; for, sometimes, certain

A tonga accommodates four persons, including the driver ; that is to say, three passengers.

hotel manager or the Dâk Bungalow baboo to make the necessary financial arrangements. At any rate, the proper fare is from Rs. 15 to

Rs. 20 for the round trip; though a native can get it done for less.

The drive by tumtum to Ali Musjid and back should cost from Rs. 10 to Rs. 15, and to Jamrud from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3.

Fares to other  
places of inter-  
est in the Pass.

The drive to Jamrud can also be done by phaeton for from Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 for the return journey. The Peshawar hack phaetons, however, are not as good, class for class, as the Peshawar hack tum-tums.

Time schedule  
of a trip to Ludi  
Kotal.

If one only desires to see the Pass itself, one can leave Peshawar at 7 o'clock in the morning, reach Ludi Kotal at noon, leave there at 3 in the afternoon, and be back in Peshawar by 6-30 or 7 o'clock—in ample time for a good bath and a wash before dinner.

There is a Dāk Bungalow in the fortified *serai* at Ludi Kotal where one can put up for lunch; but it must be borne in mind that no cook or servant are kept there; the traveller has to provide these himself as well as whatever food he requires. Prior to starting from Peshawar, he can easily ascertain exactly what he will require for the excursion on whatever day he makes it; for, sometimes, certain



stores and conveniences may be procured in the bazar or coffee shop at Lundi Kotal, which at other times can only be got from Peshawar.

“When duty calls” one cannot be a chooser of seasons wherein to travel up or down the Khyber; but, when it is the intention of the traveller to visit the place for the simple gratification of a desire to look at it, it is well to warn him that the game is not worth the candle during the hot weather, and, if any real enjoyment is to be got out of the expedition, it should only be attempted sometime between the 1st October and the middle of March. When it gets warm in the Khyber, it gets frightfully hot indeed, for the rocks absorb the heat of the sun by day and exhale it by night, so that the place is never cool. Even the hardy Afghan traders succumb to the heat. This despatch, dated August 9th, 1899, will give a fair idea regarding what happens during a hot spell, and may act as a sort of deterrent by convincing people that summer travel in the Khyber has no element of amusement about it:—

“The heat in the Khyber recently has been very intense. A short time ago a man belong-

Disadvantages  
of travelling in  
hot weather.

Comes at the  
intense heat.

Fatalities from  
heat apoplexy.

ing to a caravan died of heat apoplexy at Lal Bag. Two days later a traveller on a road near Jamrud and a coolie employed by the Public Works Department between Jamrud and Ali Musjid died from the same cause. During the same week a man and a woman accompanying a caravan died of heat apoplexy on the road near Lundi Kotal. Yet another man was taken ill and died from apoplexy during the night in the Lundi Kotal Hospital. Since these deaths arrangements have been made to send a mule load of ice or water with every caravan. 18860

The road from  
the Kotal to  
Kabul.

This *brochure* only aspires to treat of the British section of the Khyber; but, as some people are under the impression that the entire road to Kabul is through the Khyber Pass, a list of the marches beyond Lundi Kotal is here given. On days that the Pass is open for *Khafila* traffic a tourist can, as stated above, proceed by tonga or tum-tum from Peshawar to Lundi Kotal, tiffin at the Dâk Bungalow in the latter fort and return to the Frontier City in ample time for dinner, the journey up taking less than five hours and the down trip not

more than four. Beyond Lundi Kotal, however, travelling is slow and difficult, because one has to carry one's own tent, provisions, etc. Itinerary of  
the route. The marches given below are "King's Marches" so-called, and in most cases the ordinary traveller will cover at least two of them in a day. Lundi Kotal to Tor Kham is less than half a march, and is only noted on the itinerary, because at that point the traveller leaves his escort of Khyber Rifles behind and is taken in charge by Afghan guards or *Khassaddrs*.

The route is as follows:—

#### ROUTE FROM PESHAWAR TO KABUL.

STATIONS.		Miles from Peshawar	Description of Route.
Peshawar	...	0	.....
Jamrud	...	9	Excellent level road throughout.
Ali Musjid	...	21	Fair road ; steep grades in places. See description of Khyber.
Lundi Kotal	...	33	Ditto ditto.
Tor Kham	...	38	Ditto ditto.
Dakka	... ..	46	Down hill ; stony road Camp on Kabul River bank or in <i>Serai</i> .
Basawal	...	56	Fair road. No steep inclines.
Char Deh	...	62	Ditto ditto.

ROUTE FROM PESHAWAR TO KABUL.—*concl'd.*

STATIONS.	Miles from Peshawar,	Description of Route.
Gudi Kutch ...	70	Old road along river bank, rocky, heavy inclines. Impossible to wheeled traffic, but picturesque.
	74	Fair road ; level but uninteresting.
Jalalabad ...	85	Uneven road through sand, grass, and stony deserts.
Fatehabad ...	96	Trail through stony plain.
Ninula ...	104	Easy travelling through river bed. Many springs.
Gundamak ...	114	Two roads. One 7 miles over a very bad short-cut, and the other 10 miles around by a fair road.
Suraghpul ...	126	Fairly level sandy road.
Jugdullakh ...	138	About 7 miles fair up-hill road to Jugdullakh Kotul; then five miles down hill very bad travelling.
Barakhob ...	150	Bad, hilly and rock-strown road.
Samucha Mullah Mir	160	Two roads. Short route through the Lataband Pass very steep and rough over loose stones much of the way. The British military road is four miles longer, but is the best kept section between Dakka and Budkhokh.
Budkhokh ...	172	Fair road. First half dozen miles up hill. The rest level.
Kabul ...	182	Loose stones for about 2 miles ; the last 8 miles into Kabul is an excellent highway.

It is needless to state that the journey to the Afghan capital cannot be made in easy picnic fashion like that up the Khyber to Jund-i Kotal. It is a matter that requires long international correspondence. The Amir has to extend permission to the foreigner to enter his dominions, while the British Government has to secure some guarantee from the Amir that its subject will be allowed to depart again with a whole skin. By the time all these preliminaries have been arranged, the traveller has generally had ample time to learn for himself exactly what will be his requirements on the journey. In a general way it may be stated, that he must procure three ponies, or mules,—one for his tent, one for the two *yakdhan*s, or pack trunks, in which his clothing and other effects are carried, and one for his provisions—oil, lamps, cooking utensils, etc. In addition to these, he will require a couple of horses or ponies—one each himself and servant. With these he proceeds up the Khyber to Tor Kham in the ordinary way, and is met at the latter place by an escort of from half a dozen to a hundred *sowars*, or mounted troops, who have

Not an easy trip.

Equipment required for march to Kabul

Gauging the  
strength of an  
escort.

been despatched thither from Jalalabad by the Amir's orders. The strength of the escort depends entirely upon the esteem in which the traveller is held by the Amir. In addition to this, the Afghan ruler will probably send down servants, transport animals, provisions, etc., etc., to any ordinarily favored guest of his government; but it is well for the traveller to carry his own supply of oilman's stores—jams, pickles, tinned meats, etc., for he can buy nothing but bread, chicken, and mutton along his line of march. Another thing to bear in mind is the fact that though the Amir now controls a spirit distillery at Kabul where they produce the most terrible rum in all creation, nevertheless he is a good Mahomedan in other respects, and does not purvey his guests with beer or whiskey. Nobody that really needs whiskey ought to cross the Afghan frontier without an adequate supply. Another suggestion to make is in the matter of aerated water. It would require a dozen ponies to carry a sufficiency of soda-water for any one that cared for such a luxury. There are things called "Sparklets," however—capsules

A private supply of spirits necessary.



of liquid carbonic gas, with a special sort of bottle wherein they are broken and impregnate the water contained therein with carbonic acid gas; in other words, carbonate the water. With two such special bottles that only cost a couple of rupees apiece at the Stores, and a couple of boxes of the "Sparklets," one can carry the equivalent of a hundred dozen bottles of soda-water in the same space as a tin of kerosine.

The value  
Sparklets.

This disposes of the route of the Khyber. Its contour—the physical features of the country through which it is carried—may be far more briefly described. The hills that wall it in on either side, rise up from 2,000 to nearly 7,000 feet, are destitute of all verdure save scrubby patches of desert brush, with an occasional shrivelled looking thorn tree and perhaps a bunch of coarse grass sprouting here and there in the shelter. From the loftier ridges of Aspoghar, Tor Sappar, and similar elevations, splendid views of the surrounding country are obtainable. From such points of vantage the Pass itself may be traced like a yellow-brown ribbon winding in snaky curves from the broad

Monotony of  
the lands cape.

Points of van-  
tagge for brides-  
eye views.

plains of Peshawar to the narrow ones of Jala'-abad in Afghanistan, with the broad stream of the Kabul River sweeping boldly from west to east and then curving away to the northward. From Aspoghar a splendid aspect of the Pass itself and the numerous ruined villages along the road from Gurgurra towards Lundi Kotal may be had, as also a fair glimpse of Lundi Kotal itself. From Tor Sappar the view is even better, especially that of Afghanistan.

Geological formation of the hills.

The formation of all the hills is principally shale and clay slate, with great outcrops of mica schist in places—black mica that gleams in the distance and gives the outcrops the appearance of being covered with water in a region where all is arid and dry. There is also any amount of gneiss with a little limestone. The shales are ferruginous, and bands of quartz streak the shales and igneous rocks. The mica schist forms the most distinctive rock feature, however, for in the places it just from the mountain sides, it shines in the sun as though wet with rain or spring water and the patches of it are visible from great distances—in certain lights, for many miles

Rock that looks like water.

Save in the short stretches below and above Ali Musjid, and near the Lundi Kotal reservoirs, there is no water of any sort during the dry season. Where water obtains one may find cresses and similar growths in abundance, and also maidenhair and other ferns. The maidenhair grows as luxuriantly in such places as it does in the Himalayas, or in California or Killarney. Rough grasses also sprout up between the rocks in the *nullahs* or gulches; and in the arable plains, which are cultivated with primitive plows made of bent sticks with iron-shod points, all cereals seem to flourish, despite the fact that most of the fields are covered with small rocks like railway ballast. A certain number of sheep, goats, and cattle find sufficient pasturage in the hills to keep them from starving; but the Khyber is no grazing country.

---

Sparcness of  
vegetation.

## CHAPTER IV.

Some points of interest about Lundi Kotal—Tor Sappar, Suffolk Hill and Pisgah—Shinwari villages—Buddhist remains—Arrival of a *Khafila*—An interesting spectacle.

No grandeur  
such as Greece.

Views from the  
hills.

Without having as many points of interest as Rome, Paris, London or any of those other centres of universal importance, Lundi Kotal is not a place that can be studied and known in the space of two or three hours as suggested in the time schedule given in the last chapter. The *serais* of course are mere rectangular enclosures and need not be visited to be comprehended; but, to reach a proper understanding of the place and its ways, one should remain there a day or two at least. There is, for instance, a fine walk, northwards, to Tor Sappar, whence a splendid view of the snow-capped spurs of the Hindu Kush mountains may be seen, and the Kabul River winding down past Dakka, and the more distant plains of Jallalabad. Another very good view of the Afghan plains and mountain ranges may be had from the summit of Suffolk Hill, overlook-

ing Lundi Kotal, up which there is now an excellent if somewhat superfluous roadway, which was graded and cut through the rock of the hill at the time it was intended to fortify the elevation in question. It is an easy and pleasant walk from the *serai*, whence the summit may be reached in less than an hour. Mount Pisgah, also overlooking the fort and Tor Kham, is another pleasant and easy walk; and then one ought to go down and see the water tanks, wherein the main supply for the fort is stored.

Mount Pisgah  
and the water  
tanks.

The Shinwari villages back of the fort are very picturesque, especially in the spring when the fields wherein they are situate are emerald green, and the dead red-brown of the surrounding hills is softened by odd scraps of verdure—mere scrub and thorn, no doubt, but still a pleasing change from the usual and inexorable neutrality of rock color. Their charm vanishes on too close on inspection; for their inhabitants are not tidy people, and half the children one sees playing about are suffering from sore-eyes, ring-worm, and other visibly unpleasant complaints. It may be

The Shinwari  
villages.

Do not court  
inspection.

stated for their part that the Shinwaris by not court close inspection ; in fact, they do not like strangers to enter their villages under any circumstances.

Other points  
of interest,

Other points of interest are the remains of the Buddhist wall—evidently a frontier defence of pre-Christian times,—which crests the hill above, beyond, and to the west of the water tanks. Some remains of an old temple also exists in this locality. The site of the destroyed Afridi villages lower down the Pass—*ubi Troja fuit*, so to speak—might also be looked over ; and one might possibly have a chance of inspecting the Bori Pass—a narrow but picturesque defile leading over into the Bazar Valley from a point about four miles southwest of the fort. It is dangerous, however, for any but an armed party to make excursions to any of the points of interest not directly on the Pass itself.

Arrival of a  
*Khafila*,

For one who has never witnessed such a spectacle, it will be found most entertaining to watch the arrival of a *Khafila* in the *serai* on a Monday or Thursday evening, and to note how these strange merchants from Kabul,



Bokhara, and even from far Tibet, encamp and rest themselves for the night before making the last stage of their journey down the Pass on the morrow morning. The charm of the picture wears off after a while ; but, on first view, it is really delightful to watch the kine-  
toscopic picture presented by this army of traders and their followers. There are the hundreds of slow, undulant, slobbery-lipped camels, stalking along sedately with great bulging nets full of pomegranates from Kabul, or bales of silver and golden threads and sequins, or precious silks and rich embroideries from Bokhara and the looms of Turkistan ; then there are laden mules, and oxen, and ponies, and donkeys of all sizes and breeds ; then also there are the hardy and dirty camel-drivers—the *Oont-wallahs*—that unload their grunting charges of their bulky burdens on the sands of the *serai*, and then lead them—still grunting and groaning and bubbling in that nasty way that only camels can—to the steep sided tank near by—adjacent to the graveyard in fact—where they skate about on the slippery bank, and stumble most awkwardly, ere they leisurely but noisily

The camels  
and their bul-  
dens.

Filling their  
numerous sto-  
macs.

A motley  
gathering.

Their couch  
and counter-  
pane.

proceed to fill their numerous stomachs with water. With these are commingled women in *purdah*, merchants' assistants, scallawags and adventurers, and children of every age, all variously attired in the picturesque rags that serve as clothes in every *khom*, *khel* and clan between Bokhara and Peshawar. They bicker with each other, shriek and occasionally hoot like owls, till the sun goes down, and their frugal meals are finished ; and then they lie down by their treasures, with the earth as their bed and the sky as their counterpane, and sleep until maybe an hour or two before the dawn, when they rise to pack and prepare for the thirty-mile march down the Khyber.

It sounds oriental, of a truth, and it is oriental ; but if you want to know what Khyber *Khafilas* really mean, you must be at Ali Musjid about noon time on a Friday, when the Afghan-bound and the Indian-bound caravans meet and pass. Watch them there for say three hours at a stretch, and in a month or so you will have seen enough of *Khafilas* to last you for ever and for ever.

## CHAPTER V.

The tribes of the Khyber—Good behaviour of the Shinwaris—Lawless habits of the Zakka Khels—Some incidents of their history—The Malikdins—Their bygone greatness,—The Kukkis, Kamrais, Kambars and Sipahs.

With the exception of the Shinwaris, who have always been a well behaved lot, the Khyber tribes are principally composed of ruffianly characters, who, however, are hardy and brave, and make excellent soldiers when properly drilled and disciplined. These Shinwaris are the only tribesmen whose villages along the Pass were left standing after the re-taking of the Khyber by General Hammond in the winter of 1897-98; and, on the plateau around and about Lundi Kotal, they have about sixty of those walled villages of the country, duly protected by towers. Distributed among these villages are over 850 fighting men. These helped General Hammond's force to picket the upper section of the Khyber when he entered the Pass in December 1897. Like all the hillmen, they are of splendid physique, being tall and raw-boned with

Good food for powder.

A nation of sixty villages.

Physical characteristics of the Shinwaris.

immense feet and hands and rather a Jewish type of countenance. Some of the men are considerably over six feet in height, and, as a race, they are decidedly good looking.

Descending the Pass, the next tribe we come to is the Zakka Khels, the Pakhai section of which owned about fifty of the fortified villages in the vicinity of the road that were destroyed by the British during the spring of 1897.

The trouble-  
some Zakkas.

The Zakkas are the Afridis who have given our troops, and everybody else who ever had anything to do with them, more trouble than all the other Khels put together. Their reputation for evil was as thoroughly established over thirty years ago as it is to-day. Writing officially thereon in 1864, Major James—one of the ablest officers ever in charge of the Peshawar Division—observed *inter alia*: “In no instance are the wild and lawless habits of the Afridi race so fully illustrated as in the Zakka Khel. \*

\* \* \* Cultivating but little, despising the trade in firewood, which is the chief means of subsistence in winter to most of the other tribes, they depend wholly upon plunder. Expertness in thieving is the sole characteristic

The virtue  
admired by  
maidens.

which leads to distinction amongst them, and is a virtue which maidens seek in their future husbands, and mothers fondly look to for their new born babes. Every male child is consecrated, as it were, at his birth to crime. A hole is dug in the wall similar to those made by burglars, and the infant is passed backwards and forwards through it with the words '*Ghal Shah, Ghal Shah, Ghal Shah !*'—'Be a thief, be a thief, be a thief !'

Hopeful prospects for male infants.

\* \* \* Their want of faith is so notorious that their oaths are not considered sufficient security even in Afridi Jirgas (Councils), which require from them hostages when it is necessary to enter into engagements with them." Further on, Major James explains how these pious worthies, being without a *ziarat*, or place of pilgrimage within their own borders, seized the first worshipful subject that came in their way. "He was slain ; the stones were heaped on him, and a few days after the Zakka Khel were proudly paying their devotions at the grave of their own *Pir*."

How to make a shrine.

The district wherein the Zakka villages lined the Pass before their destruction lay between



The genuine  
locality of the  
Khyber.

the point marked Gurgurra on the outline map and the Kanda Ravine, about a mile below Lundi Kotal. Among the residents of this section of the country the tract lying between these two points is alone known as the Khyber, though the entire Pass, and the ranges of hills surrounding it, are by us erroneously termed the Khyber.

Nadir Shah's  
repulse from  
Lundi Kotal.

The Malikdins, who come next on the Pass, are not so powerful in the Khyber as they are in Tirah, and they are not such rogues as the Zakkas. Formerly they were the premier Afridi tribe, and, in the days when the Afridis, with the Orakzais, repulsed the army of the conqueror, Nadir Shah, from Lundi Kotal, it was a Malikdin Chief, Dariya Khan, who interviewed the Persian King when he subsequently entered the Bazar Valley, intending to punish the hill men.\* When the conqueror saw the Malikdin delegate chewing the root of a mazzarai, or dwarf palm, in default of better provision, and learned that the hill men could live and fatten

---

\* It was an Orakzai Chief who guided the army of the conqueror to Peshawar, *viâ* Tirah and the Bazar Valley.



on such simple diet, he felt confident that no good could come of conquering such people, so he took his army away. To this day nearly all the Afridi tribes seem to enjoy the hardships of poverty and to live lives of the utmost frugality.

Afridis enjoy poverty.

The Kukki Khels are mostly a bad lot, and are harbourers of thieves and murderers. They are very well armed; have supplied excellent soldiers to our native army. Considering the total strength of the *Khel*, it has supplied an extraordinary number of officers to our native regiments, and many of these have achieved considerable distinction in the service. Though the Kamrai, Khamber, and Sipah Khels have each a small section of the Pass to look after, and are expected to protect the telegraph lines, etc., along the same, none of these clans own land directly abutting on the Khyber. The Kamrais enjoy the distinction of being the smallest Afridi *Khel*. They inhabit the Bara Valley, and are a comparatively peaceful and well disposed lot. The Khambars are a very powerful tribe and fairly well behaved. Moreover, they have furnished the Khyber Rifles, as well as

Excellent food for powder.

The smallest *Khel*.

Respectable  
reputation of  
the Sipahs.

the cavalry and infantry of the native army with numbers of excellent soldiers. They also inhabit the Bara Valley as well as the Maidan of Tirah and Plain, the Kajura, west of Bara Fort. The Sipahs have the same haunts, save that they do not extend into the Tirah country. Their cave dwellings, which they occupy during the winter months, extend for a length of five miles up the Kajura Valley. They bear perhaps the best reputation for good behaviour of all the Afridi tribes, and have also an excellent name for bravery. Singularly enough, however, few, if any, of them take service in our army. This is probably because their lands in the Bara Valley supply them with all the requirements. That they comfort themselves with a certain amount of decency and self-restraint may be inferred from the fact that only one of their *Maliks* or headmen have been killed since 1878. The Kamrais, with only 500 or 600 fighting men, have had four of their *Maliks* slain within the same period, while three headmen of the Khambars were murdered between 1880 and 1889.

With regard to the foregoing, the following commentary on the Khyber Afridis that

appeared in the last published official *Gazetteer* of the Peshawar District—1883-84—will be found interesting. It should be remembered, when reading remarks compiled by the then Commissioner, that they were written thirteen years before the Tirah rising of 1897, when the Pass had been but five years under the direct control of the British *Raj*, and years before the savage *jezailchis*, who then guarded *Khafilas*, had been developed into the serviceable body of irregulars, who—being armed with Sniders and decently clad in *Khaki*—reaped a splendid harvest of D. S. O's in the Black Mountain Expeditions of 1888 and 1891. Things have changed since those days, of course; but the estimate of the Afridi character then and there officially set forth in the *Gazetteer* will apply as well to the present as it did to the former decade.

This is what the *Gazetteer* says :—

“The Khyber Afridis and the Aka Khel differ from all the other clans, surrounding the Peshawar district, in this respect, that during the hot weather they retire to the cool high-lands on the eastern slopes of the Sufaid Koh, where in the plateau known as Tirah they

Summer quar-  
ters of the  
Khyber Afridis.

occupy extensive settlements. In the winter they descend to the hills and valleys on the immediate border from Jamrud to the Kohat Pass; cultivating what little arable land there is; engaging as tenants with the *Zamindars* of Peshawar; pasturing their flocks on the lower hills and grassy plains at their foot; and carrying on a large trade with the Peshawar district in firewood, charcoal, grass, mats and ropes made of the leaf of the dwarf palm. The permanent habitations of the Khyber Afridis and Aka Khel, with a few exceptions, are in the Upper Bara Valley and Tirah and in their visits to the lower hills during winter they live practically the life of nomads.

Nomads  
heart, at

“Commencing with the Khyber Afridis, it will be convenient to note that they are divided into the following clans: the Kuki Khel, the Qambar Khel, the Maliklin Khel, Sepah Kamrai, and the Zakha Khel. Our earliest contact with them occurred in the course of the first Afghan war, during which they fully sustained their ancient character of bold and faithless robbers, excellent fighting men in a guerilla war, but incapable of any permanent

Bold and faith-  
less robbers,

combination, or of resisting the passage of a well-handled body of troops. After the annexation of the Punjab up to the commencement of the second Afghan war, our relations with the Khyber Afridis were of a more or less friendly character. There was never any permanent rupture with the Afridis, nor, on the other hand, could it be said that they ever abstained from marauding incursions on that part of the border which is open to their depredations, that is to say, between Jamrud and the Bara Fort, or from thieving and plundering in the Peshawar City and Cantonment. But it is noteworthy that we have never had hitherto to deal with a general tribal combination of Afridis, and to meet them in a stand-up fight, as has been the case with the Yusaf Zai tribes and the Mohmands. The reason for this is probably to be found in the much more democratic constitution and restless and turbulent temperament of the Afridis which makes a tribal coalition among them a matter of far greater difficulty than among the Mohmands, or Yusaf Zai, who possess hereditary leaders in their respective *Khans*; and, secondly, it is

These were  
the days before  
Dargai.

Lack of tribal  
coalition.



The situation  
in 1879.

due in part no doubt to the fact that the Khyber Afridis are in the winter almost entirely dependent on the Peshawar district for their means of subsistence ; and that their winter settlements in the Kajurai Plain are open to an easy and rapid attack from Peshawar. Accordingly, we find that the only tribe which does not visit Kajurai or the Eastern Khyber in the winter, the Zakka Khel of the Bazar Valley, and Bara were the chief robbers and plunderers in the Peshawar district before the commencement of the second Afghan war.

Maintaining  
the peace of the  
Pass.

“ When the war broke out we found among the Khyber Afridis two parties, one of which was ready to side with us ; the other made common cause with the Amir. The headmen of the friendly party were called in, and entered into engagements to maintain security and peace in the Pass and to control their tribesmen, receiving in return subsidies fixed on the scale in force during the first Afghan war under similar conditions. Owing, however, to the fact that the party in opposition possessed considerable influence among the clans, the arrangement did not work with



complete success, and two expeditions to the Bazar Valley were necessary to punish attacks upon the Khyber road. After the treaty of Gandamuk, the headmen and tribesmen in opposition submitted and came in to the British officers; a fresh settlement of affairs in the Khyber Pass being made in August 1879. The first settlement. New engagements were entered into and a redistribution of subsidies among the clans themselves was effected; the headmen who had been in opposition were recognized according to their influence and power in the clans. The arrangements hereafter worked smoothly, and although it was of course not to be expected that the instincts of the Afridis should not break out under strong temptation, yet, as a whole, the settlement come to in September 1879 proves to have in it the elements of stability and permanence. On the retirement of British troops from Afghanistan it was determined to make arrangements to keep the Pass open under the independent and exclusive charge of the tribes concerned. After protracted negotiations a complete *Jirga* of all the Khyber tribes affixed their seals to a final agreement

The Agree-  
ment of 1881.

with the British Government in February 1881, an outline of the principal terms of which is as follows :—

(1) The independence of the Afridis to be recognized, but exclusive political relations to be maintained with the British Government.

(2) The Afridis to undertake to maintain order in the Khyber, and to guarantee the good conduct of their members, in consideration of subsidies to be paid by Government.

\* Terms of the  
Agreement.

(3) The tribe to furnish a corps of *Jezailchis* for the protection of caravans through the Pass.

(4) All tolls to be taken to Government.

(5) The tribes to be jointly responsible for the engagements thus entered into and for the maintenance of peace and order in the Pass.

Withdrawal of  
British troops  
from the Pass.

“ When these arrangements were complete and in working order, the British troops were withdrawn on the 21st of March 1881 from the positions they had held at Ali Musjid and Lundi Kotal. For the last three years the

Pass has been kept open by the tribes themselves, and it is not too much to say that up to the present time the arrangements made in 1881 have proved to be completely successful; the once dreaded Khyber Pass is now literally as safe as the Grand Trunk Road in the most orderly district of British India.

Efficacy of the  
arrangements  
with the Afridis.

“The border generally where the Khyber Afridis fringe the line has been undisturbed, save by the two night-attacks led by Kamal, the Malikdin Khel, and his gang on the picquet of Native Cavalry at Peshawar in June 1881. The act, with a similar raid at Kohat in September 1881, was that of individual ruffians who were actuated by motives of personal revenge. The raids were not the outcome of collective tribal ill-feeling against the British Government, nor were they directed by any desire for plunder; they were unconnected with the affairs of the Khyber, and they in no way disturbed our general relations with the Khyber Afridis. Still it was necessary to hold Kamal's tribesmen responsible for his deeds, and suitable fines were levied from the Malikdin Khel and Qambai Khel, members of which clans had

The raids of  
1881.

been concerned in the attacks. The fines were paid without difficulty and the affairs of the Khyber remained tranquil."

Of course it will be borne in mind that the *Gazetteer* from which the foregoing pages have been taken was compiled some fourteen years previous to the advent of the Mad Mullah on our North-Western frontier, and the other events that culminated in the Tirah campaign of 1897-98.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

Subsidies paid to the tribes—Zones of the Pass for which the various Khels are responsible—History repeating itself.

When England undertook to open the Khyber and prevent the looting of caravans, or the exaction of exorbitant tolls for immunity from aggression by the tribes along the route, she practically deprived the inhabitants of the districts affected, of what they always regarded as their Heaven-sent means of subsistence. The projected reform was to them a scheme of injustice little less than diabolical. It condemned them to perpetual poverty. Therefore the Government, in order to avert endless discontent and forays, determined—in addition to enlisting the corps now known as the Khyber Rifles from the clans which had proven the most objectionable from a commercial point of view—to pay a species of blackmail in the shape of subsidies to certain Afridi Khels or clans, in consideration of their each being nominally responsible for a certain

Clansmen  
deprived of a  
living.

Blackmailing  
the Govern-  
ment.

section of the Pass, and their guaranteeing that no crime be committed therein. The sections thus divided off are as follows :—

From Jamrud to Fort Maude	...	The Kukkis.
From Maude, a distance of a mile and a half up the Pass	...	The Sipahs.
From the end of the Sipahs' zone of responsibility, about a mile to the elbow where the Pass takes a sharp turn to the north	...	The Kamrais.
Thence to a point a mile and a half south of Ali Musjid	...	The Kukkis.
Thence for a mile	...	The Khambers.
Thence for two miles	...	The Malikdins.
Thence to a point, about a mile and a half below Lundi Kotal	...	The Zakkas.
Thence to the Afghan frontier	...	The Shinwaris.

Handsome  
scale of remun-  
eration.

These clans, all things considered, receive high pay for the small responsibilities they are called upon to assume, and the entirely negative part they play in the administration of the Khyber. Only three of the Afridi Khels—the Kukkis, Malikdins, and Zakkas—actually own land on the Khyber. Of course the Shinwaris control the upper portion of the road, but they are not Afridis ; indeed, they were at one time great carriers, and their horses packed a fair percentage of the trade between India and



Afghanistan until the restrictions imposed upon commerce by the Amir practically ruined their transport business. Their comparatively virtuous character, however, has not proven a profitable asset where subsidies are concerned, and they receive the smallest allowance but one of the seven sections subsidised. The following are the amounts paid :—

Disadvantages of being virtuous.

			Rs.	
Zakka Khels	...	...	1,700	per mensem.
Kukki Khels	...	...	1,300	„
Malikdin Khels	...	...	1,300	* „
Sipah Khels	...	...	1,300	„
Kamber Khels	...	...	1,300	„
Kamrai Khels	...	...	500	„
Shinwaris	...	...	805	„
Mullagories (compensation)	...	...	2,000	per annum.
Shilmanis ( ditto )	...	...	2,000	„

These amounts give a total of Rs. 90,460 per annum paid out in subsidies. The expense may seem high, but the results have been admirable. Since the opening of the Pass, only one *Khafila* has been attacked, and that was in 1882, when a marauding band of

Excellent results of a seemingly bad system.

---

\* This amount is supplemented by a sum of Rs. 2,000 per annum "snuff" allowance.

Bazar Valley Zakkas entered the Pass at a point about three miles above Ali Musjid and attempted to loot a caravan. They were driven off by the Khyber Rifles who killed four of the enemy, and had one of their own men wounded.

Not a new  
system.

Before disposing of this subject, it should be stated that the British *Raj* is by no means the first that has had to subsidise the Khyber clansmen. The successors of Nadir Shah in Peshawar were paying tribute to the Afridis up to the time of the Sikh invasion of that district in 1818.

During the perpetual struggles that beset the Peshawar country for nearly a quarter of a century, succeeding the death of Timur Shah in 1793, history tells us that the hill tribes were always at the disposal of the highest bidder, and were for the most part stanch supporters of Shah Shuja, who was compelled in return to pay largely for their services, "in addition to the sum of 1½ lakhs, annually paid in the time of his predecessors to the tribes of the Khyber for keeping open the road.\* Indeed, all the

---

\* See *Gazetteer* of the Peshawar District, 1883-84 page 51.

revenues of Peshawar under the Duranis were absorbed in the payment of such allowances to the hill tribes and to the Chiefs of the plain who were called on for occasional services with the militia. ”

Payments under the Duranis.

The records of the history of the Khyber prior to this period are eminently unreliable, and even in that exhaustive work, Dr. W. M. Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, recent history is seemingly scant considering the comparative fame and importance of the Pass. In the paragraphs devoted to the subject he writes :—

“ During the first Afghan War the Khyber was the scene of many skirmishes with the Afridis and of some disasters with our troops. Colonel Wade, with from 10,000 to 11,000 of all arms, including the Sikh Contingent, moved from Jamrud on the 22nd July 1839 to Gagri; here he halted a day and entrenched his position; on the 24th July he again marched to Lala China; on the 15th he moved to the attack of Ali Musjid, sending one column of 600 men and 2 guns, under Lieutenant Mackeson, to the right; and companies of

The first Afghan war.

Capture of Ali  
Musjid.

infantry, 16-pounder gun, and one howitzer to the left; while below a column was placed to watch the mouth of Sháda Bagádi gorge. Both columns drove the enemy before them, the right meeting with some opposition, and the left getting into a position to shell the fort. On the 26th all the enemy's outposts were driven in, and on the 27th they evacuated the fort. The enemy had 500 *jazailchis*, or musket men, and were supported by several hundred Khyberis. The British loss was 22 killed and 158 wounded. After this there was no further opposition.

British losses.

Defence  
of Lala China.

“A strong post was left in Ali Musjid, and a detachment near Lala China to maintain communication with Peshawar, and a post of irregulars, under Lieutenant Mackeson, was placed near Dhaka. The post near Lala China was attacked during the operations. It was garrisoned by Yusafzai auxiliaries whose numbers had been thinned and the survivors were worn down by continued sickness, when the Khyberis estimated at 6,000 strong attacked their breastwork. They were long kept at bay, but the marauders were animated by the love

of plunder and persevered in their attacks. <sup>A merciless</sup> They were aware that the devoted garrison <sup>massacre.</sup> had recently received their arrears of pay, and that a sum of Rs. 12,000 was buried on the spot, which was an old Khyberi haunt. Finally, they carried the weak field-work, and mercilessly put to the sword 400 of its defenders. They did not keep possession of it, but, after repeating their vain attempts on Ali Musjid and Captain Ferris' posts in the valley, retired to their mountains.

“ When Jalalabad was blockaded, it was proposed to send a force through the Khyber to its relief, and, as a preliminary measure, Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley was detached to occupy Ali Musjid with two regiments of Native Infantry. He marched on the night of the 15th January 1842 and reached the place with little opposition the next morning. Through some mismanagement, however, only a portion of the provisions requisite for the two regiments accompanied them. It became necessary, therefore, to forward the residue without delay ; and to this end, and with the purpose of afterwards moving upon Jalalabad, Brigadier Wild <sup>Relief of Jallal-</sup> <sup>abad.</sup>

General Wild's  
failure.

advanced from Jamrud with the remaining two regiments (the 60th and 30th Native Infantry) and 4 Sikh guns. But the appearance of Colonel Moseley's detachment had alarmed the Afridis, who now rose and, closing the Pass, prepared to resist Brigadier Wild's entrance. The Brigadier, nevertheless, pushed onwards on the 19th January, and encountered the enemy at the mouth of the Pass; but, owing to the uselessness of the Sikh guns, and the inadequacy of his force with so powerful a body of the enemy advantageously placed in his front, his attempt to reach Ali Musjid totally failed. The situation of Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley, shut up as he was in Ali Musjid, with scarcely any provisions, now became desperate. He was not too long, however, in deciding upon the course which it became him to take under circumstances of so serious a nature. He cut his way back to Jamrud; his reasons for doing so being, that he found that the remnant of his stores only amounted to 6 maunds of atta for the subsistence of 2,500 men, who had already been 5 or 6 days on half rations, and who had been

Colonel Mose-  
ley's dash for  
liberty.

Short rations  
for an Army.



exposed for eight days, without tents, to an inclement climate.

“The next occasion on which the Khyber Pass was used as a great military road was when General Pollock advanced on the 6th April 1842. On his return to India the British Army marched through the Khyber in three divisions. The first, under General Pollock, passed through with no loss. The second, under General McCaskill, was not signally fortunate; one brigade being overtaken by night, left two mountain-train guns with the rear-guard, which was suddenly attacked, and the guns taken, though they were recovered next day. The rear-guard of General Nott’s force was also attacked on the 5th and 6th November between Lundi Khana and Lal Bagh, and again on leaving Ali Musjid.

General Pollock’s advance.

Early rear-guard actions.

“It was at Ali Musjid in the Khyber that Sir Neville Chamberlain’s friendly mission to the Amir Sher Ali Khan was stopped and repelled with threats. This was in 1878, when Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India, had determined on such a final attempt to establish

Stopping Sir Neville Chamberlain’s mission

The second  
Afghan war.

Close of the  
war.

British influence in Afghanistan. On the repulse of General Neville Chamberlain's mission, an ultimatum was handed to the Amir's General, Faiz Muhammad, in Ali Musjid ; and the day specified having passed without the return of an answer, Afghanistan was invaded by three British columns, one of which started from Jamrud at the mouth of the Khyber. The other columns started from Thal and Quetta. On the second day of the campaign the fortress of Ali Musjid,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Jamrud, was brilliantly captured by the British Troops under Sir Samuel Browne. The successful passage of the Khyber by Sir Samuel Browne's force, and the unopposed occupation first of Dhaka at the eastern mouth of the Pass, and then of Jalalabad in the plains beyond, were immediately subsequent events. The treaty which closed the war in May 1879 left the Khyber tribes for the future under British control. "

---

## CHAPTER VII.

The Khyber Rifles, their establishment and personnel  
 —History of their organisation—Their services in the  
 Black Mountain Expedition—Cost of their maintenance  
 —Cost of the total up-keep of the Khyber.

The Khyber Rifles, under the new orders promulgated in June 1899, consists of twelve companies of infantry, each 100 strong with native executive officers. The mounted strength consists of four *duffudars*, of 49 sowars, under one *jemadar*. There is one European Commandant, two Battalion Commanders, two Adjutants and one Quartermaster. The Commandant's appointment is for a term of seven years, while the appointments of the other British officers is for five years. The head-quarters of the corps is at Fort Jamrud at the lower end of the Pass. Eight of the twelve companies are recruited from the Khyber Pass Afridis—Zakkas, Malikdins, etc., and the other four from adjacent non-Afridi tribes, such as Shinwaris, Mullagoris, and the like. The regular traffic of the Pass as guarded by these troops consists of one *Khafila* or caravan

Establishment  
of the Corps.

Whence it is  
recruited.

per week each way during the hot weather, and two each way during the cooler months of the year when the trade is heavier. The Government reserves the right to use the Pass on any day it so pleases. Also, subject to special orders, the Pass may be opened on days other than the regular *Khafila* days when such opening seems necessary.

Hardy and  
serviceable sol-  
diers,

The Khyber Rifles is a corps composed of those same Afridis who formerly derived a precarious livelihood from looting stray convoys and robbing their neighbours whenever the opportunity offered itself. They are physically a splendid set of men, hardy as nails, excellent shots, and serviceable soldiers. Many of them joined the revolting clans when Lundi Kotal was evacuated in August 1897, but they did so under the misapprehension that the British *Raj* had been overthrown at home and in the nearer East, and long since they practically all returned to their allegiance. They proved themselves terrible enemies when fighting against us ; but India has no better soldiers than these same Pathan hillmen.

Though they certainly lack the smartness of a crack line regiment, it is a joy to watch them marching or climbing up a hill-side. They have a long stride and immense feet, with the wind of antelopes, and seeming entirely impervious to the fatigue of campaigning, though ready to sleep like puppies as long as there is nothing for them to do. They have a band of their own—a strange and wonderful affair—that plays of an evening, ~~after~~ the Retreat has sounded, at Jamrud, and forms the most extraordinary sample of blended frontier savagery and western civilisation that can come within the comprehension of man. Its instruments are strange reeds and pipes and tom-toms, some of these latter being beaten with the flat of a stick, and others with the hands or fingers. The airs played vary in character and sentiment, and the *repertoire* of the company takes in a long array of selections from the *Amir's March* to *The Wearin' o'r the Green*, inclusive. The latter played in flats by the Khyber Rifles band is one of the most awful and awesome combinations of noise ever perpetrated under the name

Impervious to fatigue.

The Khyber  
Rifle's Band.

of music. It is almost as awesome to see it being played as it is to hear it. A deaf mute would quake at the spectacle. Every body is frightfully in earnest, and the bearded bandmaster rolls his eyes terribly at his underlings, who stand around him in a circle and play like mad. Some of these latter—those that play the high-pitched reeds requiring great wind power—have so distended their cheeks by continuous practice that when they play their eyes are eclipsed. Others *per contra* endeavour to emulate the bandmaster, and one feels apprehensive every moment that their eyes will drop out of their heads. Of a surety the band of the Khyber Rifles is a thing to hear and see ; but once is quite enough.

History  
the Corps.

of The corps was organised when the Pass was opened in 1878, and was then composed of irregular levies of *jezailchis*, armed with old-fashioned jezails, as their name implies. They were raised during the progress of the second Afghan war, and were subsequently gradually regularised and given uniforms. This latter event in their history occurred at the time of the Black Mountain Expedition of 1888, when



they were also given Snider rifles. They subsequently served in the campaign of 1891, and on both of these expeditions the corps received numerous Orders of Merit—the only equivalent to the V. C. available to native troops. Until its recent reorganisation as a double battalion force, the Corps was composed of 800 footmen and 30 *sowars* or horse troops. Their Commandant from 1882 until January 1898 was Colonel Mahamed Aslam Khan, a scion of the reigning Afghan dynasty ; but on his appointment as Political Officer of the Khyber in the winter of 1897-98, the command devolved upon Captain F. J. H. Barton, of the Guides Corps, the present Commandant, who had long experience as a Political Officer among the tribes on that section of the frontier. As a matter of fact, Captain Barton was stationed at Lundi Kotal as Commandant Khyber Rifles just prior to the outbreak in August 1897, when he was re-called by Sir Richard Udny. He subsequently rendered very valuable services as Political Officer with the Peshawar Column ; but in view of Colonel Aslam Khan's more intimate relations with

Good records  
as fighters,

The Commandant  
of the  
Corps.

the Khyberis, he was appointed Political Officer of the district when the negotiations for the surrender of the revolting tribes were entered upon in 1898.

Cost of main-  
taining the  
Corps.

The Khyber Rifles, previous to their reorganisation, cost Rs. 90,000 *per annum* to maintain, *plus* an extra allowance of Rs. 3,000 *per annum* that is paid to them for keeping the roadway of the Pass in good condition. The additional battalion has now increased the cost of maintaining the Corps by Rs. 30,000 *per annum* which brings the total to Rs. 1,23,000 *per annum*. This amount is considerably over the total revenue accrued from the road tax specified below, which only amounts to Rs. 60,000 at the outside, and is the sole source of income produced by the Pass itself. The difference of Rs. 63,000 *per annum* is, however, a mere bagatelle in the sum total of the expense that the maintenance of the Khyber entails upon the British Government, which—excluding the cost of all military expeditions, etc.—is at least Rs. 2,60,000 *per annum*.

Cost of the  
Khyber estab-  
lishment.

The items making up this amount are as follows:—

Khyber Rifles pay roll	..	1,18,000
„ „ extra kit, etc.	..	2,000
„ „ road repair allowance	..	3,000
Khyber establishment, salaries to officers (Rs. 36,000), rewards to informers, etc., (Rs. 14,000)	..	50,000
Subsidies to Khyber tribes	..	90,000
		<hr/>
TOTAL		Rs. 2,63,000

These figures give us an annual outlay of over 2½ lacs on the up-keep of the Khyber.

*Apròpos* of the above, it may be explained that for many years the garrisoning and policing of the Khyber Pass has been in the hands of the Rifles, and, indeed, for many years, prior to the evacuation of the Pass in August 1897, it was exclusively so. At present the Pass is still further protected by half a brigade of the regular army under the command of Colonel Neville Chamberlain. But these troops will be withdrawn in January 1900 and the custody of the Pass and the convoy of caravans will then be left to the care of the Khyber Rifles.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The trade of the Khyber—Its history—The old Tartara route—Its decline and consequent ruin of the Mullagoris—Days on which the Pass is open—Income of the Pass from taxes—The Amir's trade monopolies.

How the bulk  
of trade is car-  
ried.

The trade of the Khyber, which it costs the Empire so much to protect, is a dwindling and peculiar quantity. It must be borne in mind that the entire commerce through this narrow defile which links our Empire with the Amir's dominions, is conducted by means of the *Kafilas*, so called, referred to above.—long caravans of camels, mules, oxen, etc., with a very few bullock carts, which carry the products of Afghanistan into India, and return laden with the products of this country and England. Nearly all the animals employed are the property of Afghans or neighbouring hillmen ; but few Indian-owned transport animals being used.

Prior to our acquisition of the Pass in 1878, its trade was practically *nil*. Experience had taught the traders that the Afridi tribesmen inhabiting it could not be depended upon to

grant immunity to their convoys, and accordingly they took their caravans from Dakka round by the Tartara Pass through the Shilmani and Mullagori countries. This route was a far more difficult one than the Khyber, but when the Shilmanis and Mullagoris accepted tolls for the safe conduct of a caravan, they acted up to their promises. The Khyber tribes did not. The result of this condition of affairs was that these two tribes became very wealthy.

Former prosperity of the Mullagoris and Shilmanis.

When the English opened the Khyber, the days of their prosperity were ended, and they now receive a nominal subsidy of Rs. 2,000 a year apiece from the British Government as compensation for the loss they have suffered by the divergence of the trade into its natural channel. To do them justice they have never attempted any molestation of convoys since that date, even though they are miserably poor.

Their ruin.

Since the acquisition of the Khyber by the English, Tuesdays and Fridays have been set apart as the days upon which the *Khafilas* may traverse the Pass.\* On those days it is

Days on which the Pass is open.

---

\* Traffic through the Khyber Pass, which closed when the Afridis revolted in August 1897, was recommenced on 15th<sup>th</sup> March 1898, after it had been entirely suspended for a period of nearly seven months.

Its normal  
state of desola-  
tion.

picketed, after a fashion, and the convoy guards of Khyber Rifles escort the caravans to and from Lundi Kotal and Jamrud. For the other five days of the week the Pass is practically empty. Some Afridi nomad may stalk it through, some shepherd may be found skulking under a friendly rock while his little flock grazes by the way side: for the rest, the blue or yellow butterfly gadding here and there in the sun, the whizzing locust, the scavenger hawk or vulture, the carolling skylark or the grey wagtail chittering where the rare spring drips over the tufts of maiden hair in a secluded corner among the boulders, is all the life one may expect to see in the Khyber. In the few places where the hill-bound gorge seems to expand to give itself a breathing space, some trousered Afridi woman, or lazy husband-man, may be seen tilling a yellow field; but, in the long wilderness of the Pass, such a scene is too rare to be worth the mentioning.

On *Khafila* days, however, the normal solitude of the Pass is transformed into a scene of tremendous bustle and activity. On Mondays and Thursdays the guards of



Khyber Rifles meet the convoys at Tor Kham by the *Khassadars*, who have their local headquarters at Painsda Kakh. Thence they are conducted to the *serai* at Lundi Kotal, where they pass the night. Early next morning the start is made for Jamrud, and the distance between the two forts is covered in the day. At the same time another *Khafila* starts from Jamrud, and the two long cavalcades meet and pass at Ali Musjid. Many of these caravans are over seven miles long, especially in October and November, when the trade is at its best. In the hot season they dwindle down to a few hundred camels.

When the  
Khyber is lively.

No import duty is imposed on these *Khafilas*, but for every animal has to be paid a poll tax at Jamrud, whether it is laden or otherwise. This is purely a road tax, and the scale of impost is as follows :—

Road tax on  
animals.

				Laden.		Unladen.
				Rs.	As.	As
Camels	...	...	...	2	0	4
• Mules	...	...	...	1	4	2
Horses or ponies	...	...	...	1	4	2
Bullocks or donkeys	...	...	...	0	10	1

Income of the  
Pass from taxes.

From this toll the Khyber Pass authorities have for many years gathered an income of about Rs. 60,000 *per annum*, though in 1897—the Pass being closed from August—the revenue was only Rs. 53,000. The maximum receipts have always been in October and November, during which months they have reached the figure of Rs. 12,000. They fall as low as Rs. 1,000 a month in the hot season.

Staples  
trade.

The Amir, whose *Khafilas* are for the most part exempt from toll, has materially curtailed the trade of the Pass during the last couple of years by imposing prohibitive export taxes and road tolls; but the normal annual revenue of the Khyber may be set down at Rs. 60,000. Presuming this to represent an average import of two per cent. on the value of the goods sent through the Pass, it would indicate a trade of Rs. 30,00,000, or £200,000, *per annum*. The principal articles of export from Afghanistan are pomegranates, raisins, grapes, melons, almonds, *poshteens* (sheepskin coats), *khalins* (rugs), horses, asafoetida, etc. Raisins are the most bulky staple of trade from

the Afghan side, but pomegranates are probably the most valuable. Thousands of camel loads of both these fruits come into India, but whereas the raisins are only worth about ten rupees per maund of 84 lbs., the pomegranates command at least forty rupees per maund in the Peshawar market. A camel generally carries about six maunds.

The Amir has a monopoly of the export trade in almonds, and some two years ago he further established a monopoly in *poshteens*. These goods which he exports as merchandise are liable to the usual road tax: but arms, ammunition, furniture, machinery and other goods consigned to himself or the Afghan Government are passed free. He has also endeavoured to form a corner in Astrakhan fur, so-called, and has thousands of skins of it, and thousands of the best khalins or carpets in the country, rotting in his Kabul warehouses; but his efforts in this direction—apart from the hurt they have done to commerce in the Khyber—have produced little effect upon the markets of the world.

The Amir's  
trade monop-  
lies.

The exorbitant taxes he levies.

From Dakka to Tor Kham is only about eight miles, yet the taxes imposed by the Amir for convoying a *Khafila* over that section of the road are from five to ten times greater than the tolls charged by the English for safe conduct over three times as great a distance. But the Amir is unwise in the restrictions he has placed upon trade. The export taxes on all products, over and above the road toll, are excessive; and, moreover, he has recently prohibited the export of horses which were once a staple of trade. The export of almonds has been his monopoly for many years, and he has lately added *poshteens* to the list. These are sheepskin coats, some of which are elaborately embroidered and cost as much as Rs. 50 a piece.



THE END.













954.23/MORR/6



18860

